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Cipinang, 3 June 1994

My dear friend Carmel,

It was a wonderful surprise to receive your kind letter this morning. As I read it I was filled with remorse for not having sent you a few lines before now ... even if only to send you, and so many other friends over there, an embrace. However, your letter says that you forgive me these lapses ...

I was summoned to answer questions at midday today too. An Indonesian newspaper reported that I had sent a message of thanks to Fidel Ramos. I had to deny it, though not out of cowardice. I was thinking mainly of safeguarding the existing links. If Fidel Ramos had resisted the pressure from Jakarta, then it would have been worth taking the blame, but he doesn't deserve such a sacrifice, and the report only worsened my already difficult situation. I managed to convince the guys, but tomorrow I am going to be formally questioned.

The consequences are not the problem. If I were able to be in touch, freely and in a normal way, with people outside, then I could find ways to divert the attention, and maintain the workability of underground contacts. However, the real problem now is that conditions are becoming increasingly limited. Only the 4 are allowed normal visits, and even some visitors are now being prevented from coming in. The names of all those who come in to see the 4 are recorded - I saw that in a book from the last enquiry in January. Furthermore, I am in a state of "psychological terror", brought about by a substantial number of prisoners, and orchestrated by the guards. I believe this is all being maneuvered by Lopa and the BIA.

I have been receiving correspondence from the interior of our Homeland, and I continue to support them, one way or another. While you, on the outside, are quite happy to publish my letters, the ones who suffer the consequences are mainly those inside. Prison officials are particularly concerned about how this reflects on them, in terms of security. From what I can gather from their concerns and warnings, if letters get out and then nothing more is heard, they can even relax the system. I could just take advantage of exceptional situations, for which I could take the blame, and which would not incur any repercussions on the prison officers here. Otherwise, links will be broken and, if I were to be transferred to Nusa Kamhangan (?) or some other prison, it would be the start of another isolation for me.

I ask, dear friend, that you relay this to GA and the others.

I deeply appreciate the offer which, I am sure, will help me immensely to gradually achieve a command of English. Command! - at least enough to enable me to send greetings and embraces to friends, in correct English.

It is true, dear friend, that things are looking encouraging. They will take their own time, but we are witnessing changes all the time. The case of East Timor is still relatively taboo for Indonesian society, and I said this to some Indonesian friends. However, the Manila Conference led to an "pulling back of the curtains" (that are so heavy). PIJAR´s presence and commitment showed considerable political maturity and courage. The demonstration at the Philippine Embassy here was another daring action!

Here, we keep in close contact with PIJAR. These young people are extraordinary and truly consistent. We are fortunate to be able to see today the fruits of the intensive work carried out by so many, from our friend Liem to Don George and others.

What surprised me was the position, according to what the 4 told me, of the "Mubes (?) ABRI" on the Conference. Before, what was going around was that Suharto was having problems with the generals over East Timor. Today, however, we are seeing exactly the opposite. Military personnel have said to me that the "politicians are stupid". Ali Alatas has been stupidly stupid in recent weeks! (Because of the problems with the other prisoners, I haven´t had access to Indonesian newspapers lately. I was transferred to another block because, on 25th, I punched a prisoner in the block where I was). A member of PIJAR, who had been imprisoned here for 1-1/2 to 2 months, came to say goodbye to me before his release. He promised that PIJAR would be fighting for East Timor´s independence. The first audacious step has already been taken in Manila. and I am confident that, just as they said they would, they will be out in the streets again, like the young Americans during the Vietnam war.

The Manila Conference wasn´t the pebble in the shoe of Ali Alatas - it was an international slap in the face for the Republic´s dictator!

I am certain that our friend Liem´s return here will contribute considerably towards a new step forward in winning over Indonesian public opinion. I am surprised that there were no reprisals in the wake of the demonstration at the Philippine Embassy. Just a few hours ago, however, at 19.00 hrs., BBC-Bahasi reported that three Timorese had been arrested in Dili, in addition to another 10, during a demonstration in support of the Manila Conference.

I think that this year could well generate, if not decisive changes, at least a very significant alteration in the regime. I believe that, beneath the apparent stability, contradictions are accumulating and will tend to explode. Would to God ... that´s just what we all want!

Dear friend, I am going to ask a special favour of you. Please relay my affection to Nick Staples of Bradford, and tell him that I was deeply moved by the postcard he sent to me. Dated

26 November 1993, which read "Dear XG - I am writing to you because I am giving you hope that you may be set free soon. I am Nick Staples, ten years old. We are thinking about you. - From Nick". I would have liked to reply personally, because I received the postcard personally, but there was no address on it. Perhaps through the local solidarity group you could send Nick love from me , as well as from all Timorese prisoners, and from the guerrillas.

That is all for today, my dear friend. Once again, I am exceedingly grateful for your offer. Please relay my best wishes to Lord Eric Avebury, Liem, the British Council for East Timor, and all friends. I wish Estevao every success. If only all Timorese abroad would think about studying, and were concerned about acquiring greater skills for the future reconstruction of our Homeland¦¦¦

For you, as well as for Liem, a very strong and prolonged embrace of high esteem.

Xanana

PS: Please excuse the hurried writing. Tomorrow I have to hand over the "ball", very early...